

**REMARKS**

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated June 5, 2003.

Claims 1-12 and 14-17 are pending with claim 13 having been canceled without prejudice.

The objection to claim 1 has been overcome by amending the claim to correct the misspelled word and therefore, this objection should be withdrawn.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. This rejection is now moot since this claim has been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) based on a number of references. More specifically, claims 1-14 are rejected as being anticipated by any one of (1) '448 Goedhart et al.; (2) Lambremont et al.; (3) Dixit et al.; (4) '886 Goedhart et al., and (5) Rayner.

As a general matter, Applicants draw the Examiner's attention to the fact that none of the compositions in the cited references are for the care and maintenance of water-resistant surfaces, as in the present application. More specifically, the '448 Goedhart et al., Dixit et al., and '886 Goedhart et al. references disclose dishwashing compositions, while the Lambremont et al. reference shows an acidic thickened shear thinning composition; and the Rayner reference discloses an abrasive composition. Thus, each of these references discloses a much different application environment than the present one and therefore, the characteristics of the respective compositions that lead to improved application performance will vary.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a composition for the care and maintenance of water-resistance surfaces that includes at least one mineral from the group of sheet silicates with an average mineral lamina size of  $< 10^{-7}$  m. The composition is also of the type that is capable of forming a film. As explained in the specification at page 7, paragraph 2, it is important that the sheet silicates in combination with the other components are capable of forming films. As further explained, a number of materials used in conventional compositions do not have such a tendency.

Accordingly, none of the cited references disclose or even suggest that a composition, including sheet silicates, that is capable of forming film and in fact, a number of the references actually teach directly away from this characteristics. More specifically, the '886 Goedhart et al., and Rayner references stress a reduced tendency to form films, as set forth in column 1, line 42 of the Goedhart et al. reference and column 1, line 37 of the Rayner reference. Since the composition of the present claims is for the care and maintenance of water-resistant surfaces (in contrast to the prior art references), the feature of forming a film provides for improved care and/or maintenance of water-resistant surfaces as set forth in the specification.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that one or more feature, namely the capability or tendency to form a film, of claim 1 is not disclosed in any of the cited references and therefore, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) can not be maintained.

Reconsideration and allowance of amended claim 1 are respectfully requested at this time.

Claims 2-12 should be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 1. Moreover, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 8 and 12 on the basis that the recited polyethylene glycol and/or polypropylene glycol are required in these claims as opposed to claim 1 where they are optional. These claims thus require the surfactant and the polyethylene glycol and/or polypropylene glycol. None of the references disclose such a combination.

Claims 15-17 should also be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 1 and moreover, these claims contain patentable features in and of themselves. For example, claim 15 recites that the composition is capable of forming a transparent film (as mentioned above, none of the cited reference discuss film forming tendencies); claim 16 recites that the surfactant of the composition consists solely of a non-ionic surfactant; and claim 17 recites that the composition has a pH value of from 5 to 10. Once again, the features of forming transparent films and a pH in the range of 5 to 10 provide for improved properties of the formed films and for an improved care and/or maintenance of water-resistant surfaces.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite a method for cleaning and care of water-resistant surfaces. One of the recited steps involves providing a composition having the characteristics recited in claim 1. Thus, for the same reasons recited above with respect to claim 1, Applicants submit that the composition provided in this step is neither disclosed nor suggested in any of the cited references.

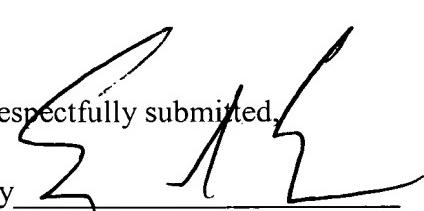
In addition, none of the cited references relates to cleaning and care of water-resistant surfaces and therefore, do not relate to the presently recited method of use of the composition. Thus, the other recited steps in amended claim 14 involve the dilution of the composition and the application of the diluted composition to the surface, thereby resulting in a residue being formed. Also, the last step recites is the drying of the residue to form a film that contains the surfactant and the sheet silicate. As mentioned, none of the cited references involve the formation of a film in any step that may relate to a use of those recited compositions.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of amended claim 14.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

By   
Edward J. Ellis

Registration No.: 40,389  
DARBY & DARBY P.C.  
P.O. Box 5257  
New York, New York 10150-5257  
(212) 527-7700  
(212) 753-6237 (Fax)  
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant